

## Podcast Transcript 22046

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: Hi everyone. This is Eloy Ortiz Oakley, chancellor of the California Community Colleges. And you're listening to another episode of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office podcast. I've been away for a little while in Washington, DC, but I am so glad to be back in the California community colleges, back in the great state of California and having the chance to once again talk to some amazing students and faculty members and representatives of the state of California on this podcast. [00:00:30] So as we get ready to turn the page on another year, it's my pleasure to begin this podcast again.

And today we're talking about a very important topic. The California community college system is making a concerted effort to reach out to the states' tribal and urban Indian populations bringing much needed awareness to the benefits of attending one of our 116 colleges. And we also are hoping to get information out on the available [00:01:00] financial assistance to our students to help them cover the cost of attending college and completing their education. With the help of community stakeholders and by using American Indian specific imagery and outreach practices, we are working hard to make sure that American Indian and Alaska Native voices are not only heard but also represented.

American Indian and Alaska Native and I'll use this term a lot so I may say AI Or AN, [00:01:30] these faculty and current American Indian and Alaska Native community college students can speak to the benefits and the advantages of enrolling in one of our amazing colleges. With 116 community colleges to choose from, students don't need to travel far from one of our 109 federally recognized tribal reservations to access quality and affordable higher education. So I have the great pleasure of welcoming a couple of very special guests today on this podcast.

[00:02:00] First we have Dr. Stanley Rodriguez. He's a member of the Kumeyaay Santa Ysabel Band of Lipay Nation and serves as an elected tribal Councilman. Dr. Rodriguez is director of the Kumeyaay Community College which is housed within Cuyamaca Community College. He also serves as a lecturer at California State University, San Marcos, an instructor and advisor at the Navy Drug and Alcohol Counselor School. [00:02:30] In 2021, he was appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom to the California Native Heritage Commission. He is also a US Navy desert storm veteran. He earned his doctor of education degree in educational leadership in the joint doctoral program at California State University of San Marcos along with the university of California, San Diego, and a masters in human behavior from National University.

He's dedicated to educating indigenous communities about [00:03:00] Kumeyaay's history, its culture and language revitalization. He's a mentor of native students of all ages and is an advocate for cultural preservation. He's also

an alumnus of Fresno city college and D-QU where he received an associate's degree in social sciences. He's also received an associate's degree in Kumeyaay studies at Cuyamaca Community College. And we also have one of our amazing students, Marissa Hemstreet. She's a member of [00:03:30] the Navajo (Diné) Nation. She's 27 years old, a part-time student in San Jose City College and works full-time at the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley.

She works specifically in the Indian Health Center's community wellness and outreach department. She leads group exercise classes and personal fitness sessions. She's certified as personal trainer by the Native American Fitness Council. She teaches Zumba, Pilates, youth fitness, chair exercise [00:04:00] and a walking group class. Something I definitely need to do instead of sitting here in front of my computer all day. Her area of expertise is in fluidity of body movement, knowing one's limits and working around them. She finds alternative routes to help a person work their way up to main body movement goals. Her focus is on assisting the students of all ages, understand how their body works, their limitations and modifying the moves to their level of mobility and flexibility.

[00:04:30] She's currently waiting to transfer to San Jose State University next Fall and taking the next steps on her journey towards becoming a physical therapist. I'm very excited to welcome both of them. So, Dr. Rodriguez and Marisa, welcome to the program.

Marissa Hemstreet.: Thank you.

Dr. Stanley Rodriguez: Thank you very much.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: So I have some questions that I've written down but, along the way, I also just want to learn so much more about both of your experiences. So why don't we begin with you, Dr. Rodriguez.

Dr. Stanley Rodriguez: Sure.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: Tell us a little bit [00:05:00] about yourself, your experiences and of course, tell us about your role at Cuyamaca College. And also, if you don't mind, because so many people know or perhaps don't know the meaning of the word Cuyamaca. So, can you help enlighten us a little bit and help our listeners understand a little bit more about your role at the college?

Dr. Stanley Rodriguez: Sure. As far as me, I've lived both on the reservation and off the reservation. So I've had opportunity of living the urban Indian lifestyle and also [00:05:30] being on... At Cuyamaca Community College, when we were taking a look at this, just real quick, San Diego has more reservations than any other county in the country.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley.: Wow.

Dr. Stanley Rodriguez: Yes. There's 18 reservations here in San Diego county, 12 of them are Kumeyaay reservations. And then there's another six Kumeyaay reservations in Baja, California, Mexico so our tribe has been cut by the international border so half of our nation is on the other side. Some [00:06:00] with that said, one of the things that have happened in the past and it's still happening to some extent today has been our people have been underserved, marginalized and in areas that are fairly remote. So being able to have the resources in order to continue in a tertiary institution like a city college or state university has been difficult. So, when we partnered with Cuyamaca Community College to start our program, [00:06:30] we wanted to reach out to all the reservations.

And we were talking, this is a daunting task, but Cuyamaca was really up for it. And they have been and are very supportive of reaching out to the communities. Some of the things, when we take a look at smart board technology, being able to develop internet capabilities so that students can take courses and bringing them into the fold. Bringing [00:07:00] counselors who can help them to help guide the pathways, things of this sort. To just bring these opportunities available. Many of the families have been the products of the boarding school era. There is a dark spot on the education system and people have been hurt by it, people are leery of education.

And this is one of the things about city colleges coming out and just being there, being mentors. And that is the big thing for the people, [00:07:30] having mentors. I'll just say for me, Dr. Proudfit, she was one of my mentors. When I was in my doctoral program, she was there for me and she was there when I defended my dissertation. So having people there, role models, people that we can believe in, they made it, I can make it too. Taking that same philosophy onto the reservations, onto the communities and bringing up enrollment and walking through them. One of the things about the Cuyamaca Community College [00:08:00] has been, they've given me a carte blanche to go and work with the people.

So, all the families, I know them so I meet a new student from one of the reservations, I ask them where they're from. I know who their family is, their parents, who their grandparents, their uncles, their aunts and we talk and it's a personal thing. We become very personal with them in developing that alliance that, yes, we're all going to work together and you will be a success story. And this is one of the beautiful things about the community [00:08:30] colleges because we get them through and we also groom them to go into other tertiary institutions. San Jose State with Professor Proudfit, getting them or Cal State, San Marcos, or San Diego State or the UC system. So these are important things for our students to see that we are there for them and the college is very supportive.

I have seen this with president Barnes from Cuyamaca. That yes, we are going to help you, we're going to do everything that we can [00:09:00] to serve you. Now the word Cuyamaca, it's a Kumeyaay word and what it means is, are you

standing behind the rain clouds? Yeah, somebody added an A on which turns into a question but it means standing behind the rain clouds but that's what that means. So it's a Kumeyaay word and it fits with Kumeyaay Community College and the things that we do. So it brings this sense of kinship and familiarity and this is something that we grow with. And not only just the reservation Indians [00:09:30] but also the native people who reside in the urban areas.

Now real quick, I just wanted to say a little history about California Indian people, Native People, California Indian People have more language diversity than any other part of the world except for Papua New Guinea. There's so much language diversity that's here, so many different tribal groups. And then, with the groups that came in during relocation, [00:10:00] California has become the state with the most Native Americans in it.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: Wow. That's something we don't think too much about as Californians but it's something that we need to continue to highlight. And let me just say that I am a big fan of your president, Juliana Barnes, she's an amazing college president so we're very lucky to have her in the system. But you've mentioned somebody who's obviously very special to you, Dr. Proudfit. Can you tell us a little bit more about her and what she does for the community?

Dr. Stanley Rodriguez: Yes. Dr. Proudfit [00:10:30] is the chair of the American Indian Studies Department at Cal State University of San Marcos. And she has worked with Kumeyaay Community College, Cuyamaca Community College, pretty much all the community colleges in promoting education for native students and also, she's gone to the various reservations doing the same thing. Incredible person.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: Yes. She sounds incredible indeed, thank you for that. You mentioned what makes our colleges special, what makes them special is also people [00:11:00] like you, Dr. Rodriguez, who gives so much to the community and to the students so for that, I thank you. And also I'd be remiss to not say thank you for your service to the United States Navy.

Dr. Stanley Rodriguez: Thank you very much.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: All right. Let's turn to Marisa now. So Marisa welcome and it's great to have you here. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself? What are your goals when you transfer and tell us a little bit about why you chose San Jose City College and some of the challenges that you face as a Native American student.

Marissa Hemstreet: [00:11:30] Well, first off, thank you for having me. Again, my name is Marisa Hemstreet. I'm from the Canoncito band of Navajo. And I started going to college in 2014 and I did take a little sabbatical just because I couldn't afford going to college and working at a regular 40 hour a week job. Some of the challenges I faced trying to go to college, so my senior year high school and nobody in my family had ever gone to college, [00:12:00] no one in my

immediate family. So I didn't know what was the pathway? The counselors at my high school, well, they were wonderful. And they were, "You should do these tests," And, "You should apply here." But I didn't know what I wanted to do, I didn't didn't feel that I received any type of career counseling.

And then I didn't see anyone like me attending those tests, they were all people of different ethnicities and I felt like the token native at my high school, I felt very disconnected from my native ancestry. [00:12:30] It wasn't until I moved to San Jose City that I actually started to meet more fellow natives especially working at the nonprofit that I do that services American Indian, Alaska Native folks and just applying to San Jose City College was a big step and I like being there. My career goals are to become a physical therapist so I will be transferring from San Jose City College to San Jose State, hopefully, this coming Fall in 2020.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: That's great. Well, we are [00:13:00] confident that you will transfer and San Jose State will be very lucky to have you. Now let me ask you, you mentioned some of the challenges you faced, not seeing yourself in education, not a lot of people sharing the same experience that you've had and you've grown up with. As you think about your experience at San Jose City College, what can we do as community college educators to help with the challenges that you face? What are things we should be thinking [00:13:30] about doing to make your experience more connected, more meaningful and to students like you?

Marissa Hemstreet: One thing that I had a conversation about recently was, when I signed up to attend San Jose City College and I filled out the basic demographic information where you put your ethnicity, I put down two. I am half Mexican and I'm half Navajo. But because I put down two ethnicities, it only counted me as Latino, I was not American Indian enough. [00:14:00] So the counselor that worked specifically with American Indians at my school, she didn't know about me. I actually learned that there was a counselor that worked specifically with us from a coworker who also attended the same school but he only put American Indian. He's also Scottish so it was interesting but I got connected eventually. But one of those things is helping students like me who are bi-racial get identified.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: Right. And we've seen, certainly with our [00:14:30] student population not only California across the country, students of multiple ethnic backgrounds are in now feeling a little bit more comfortable expressing who they identify with, which culture they identify with. So you, yourself, you're Mexican and Navajo. Which community do you identify most with at San Jose City? I mean, obviously there's a lot of support for students of ethnic background. Do you find that you get the support for the culture that you identify with?

Marissa Hemstreet: I don't get to [00:15:00] pick or choose, I'm both. I feel like I'm less disconnected from my Native roots because in Stockton where I'm from, I didn't know that. We even had an annual Stockton pow wow. And working for the agency that I

do here, Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley, it helped connect me to those roots because I go to pow wows, I outreach to people who need it. We help people, especially American Indians who suffer from diabetes. We catch them when they're pre-diabetics [00:15:30] and kind of help them get better numbers, improve themselves and just ultimately live a healthier lifestyle. So honestly, I feel that if it wasn't for my current job that I would not be as connected. Now I do have family on the reservation but the reservation is a couple of thousand miles away from where I live.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: Wow. It's so important for you to tell your story because I think so many people in communities and our colleges really don't understand some of the challenges that you face so thank you for that. And I'll [00:16:00] ask you a few more questions about your experience but let me jump to Dr. Rodriguez. You've obviously been working with your community for a long time, indigenous communities here in California. I imagine there are many students in Cuyamaca College who are of Indigenous and Mexican descent given where you're situated, how do you mentor these students? How do you help them connect to their roots and what kind of challenges do you see students facing?

Dr. Stanley Rodriguez: That's an interesting [00:16:30] question. And when you shared Marissa, you are more of the rule than the exception. I mean, most people are mixed and it depends on just who one identifies with. Some people identify as Native, some people who identify Latino, Afro-American, Asian or a combination. For our people, the Kumeyaay people, since we are on both sides of the border. [Spanish 00:16:58]. [00:17:00] So being able to do what I call code switching. When I'm in Baja and going to Kumeyaay reservations down there, I will talk Spanish. I'll talk Spanish up here too to people who need it. I'll talk Kumeyaay to the people in Baja, Kumeyaay to people up here and also English.

So, it really isn't a barrier. [00:17:30] I mean, it's just what is. And I remember, and this is close to our native epistemology, when we hear the elders say that, "I remember when our people could speak four or five languages and that was okay." And I think it's now where people have to choose one or the other and this is where it's important instead of just being able to... This is what I am and I'm a mix and I can speak Kumeyaay, I can speak Spanish, I can speak English [00:18:00] and that is not a barrier to me being who I am. So, the approach that I use when I'm working with students and community members is this, many times people will talk about building an era of tolerance.

And to me, that word tolerance, I mean it denotes negativity. I tolerate a mosquito bite or I tolerate this inclement weather. What I believe [00:18:30] and this is what I share with the students is to develop a celebration of diversity. That yes, we may be from different people but we can celebrate that diversity. we can all learn from each other. And at the same time, we still develop our own cultural grounding for ourself. So, that is how I take a look at it.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: This is an important conversation particularly for students in our system who, as you mentioned, we have so many reservations [00:19:00] in California. Our history as the people of California particularly those of us of Mexican ancestry, there's almost no way that you can separate the two in many communities. So, I think it's an important conversation we haven't had enough of so I thank you both for bringing this up. Now, Dr. Rodriguez, you are also an important part of the Kumeyaay Community College. It's a tribal college, it's housed in Cuyamaca Community College. Tell us a little bit about your work there?

Dr. Stanley Rodriguez: All right. [00:19:30] Well, Kumeyaay Community College was developed, it came out in 2005. It came out because there was a need in the communities to tell our story. Our history was not shared. I mean, the Kumeyaay side of the history of the language, all these different things were going dormant. The older people, due to attrition, they were passing away so, less and less of this knowledge was being shared. And we talked about this, that it [00:20:00] is important for us to develop a pedagogic system that will support our culture, our history and our language and our sciences. So, we started to develop these classes and then we worked with Cuyamaca. When we talk about community colleges out here, there's community colleges throughout Indian country, all over and we reached out to each other.

And we talked about our organic [00:20:30] science and how we can marry it with academia. An example that we had was Kumeyaay ethnobotany and ethno-ecology where we brought in organic scholars from the reservations who knew the plant science, the traditional Kumeyaay plant science. And also biologists who were professors at Cuyamaca and developed a curriculum where both are taught at the same time, it's a balanced curriculum. Some people said, "No, it can't be done." And it was done, [00:21:00] people really loved it. And the same thing we did with the history classes, many people view Kumeyaay or native history in California when the Spaniards landed. Our history goes back from time immemorial.

I mean, we have village sites that are under the Pacific ocean to the east and Imperial Valley, there are fish trap sites where there's desert today so our people are no strangers to climate change. We are a people of the islands, the ocean, the valleys, the mountains, [00:21:30] the desert, parts of the Colorado river and parts of the Sea of Cortez. So with that, our epistemology, it's geared to all these different areas. So we teach that in our humanities course, the different foods, the different ways of survival. We teach that in our history course talking about out all the things that happen. Incorporating our oral traditions which is in our songs, our stories, things like that and combining that with written history.

And again, making [00:22:00] robust courses. And when we were talking about language diversity, the Kumeyaay language, if we look at the UNESCO nine factors of language vitality and endangerment, five being stable, zero being extinct, the Kumeyaay language is listed as a one which is critically endangered.

Of the 4,623 Kumeyaay who reside on both sides of the border, there is approximately 31 who [00:22:30] still speak the language and most of them are over the age of 60. So with that said, Cuyamaca partnered with Kumeyaay Community College to develop language classes to reverse language shift and these classes are Kumeyaay language one, two, and three.

These are helping our students, using various techniques, to be able to use the language in conversation and these are things that we're working on today. And we're also working with our counterparts in Baja, California, [00:23:00] Mexico, there's more speakers down there, to continue to develop courses to not only help the Kumeyaay communities here in San Diego but also the ones on the other side of the border. And community college, even though they cannot directly assist in that, they have been helpful in developing, working on curriculum that can be shared with our counterparts in Baja. So these are some of the things that have been going on and again, the community college has helped us to develop [00:23:30] an associates program.

The only one in California, the only associates program in Kumeyaay studies that our graduates have gone on to San Diego State and also Cal State, San Marcos. We've had graduate from Cal State San Marcos who is now at UCLA, she's in graduate school. And having that supportive environment from the top on down, this is something that has really been helpful. And one of the things that we're hoping to do, Chancellor, we would [00:24:00] like to develop a bachelor's program in Kumeyaay studies and look [crosstalk 00:24:04] the possibility of doing that through the community college.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: That's great. Right, we certainly may have that opportunity now. So, let me get back to you Marissa and more about you. So based on your experience with San Jose City College, as you talk to your friends and colleagues particularly those who are American Indian or Alaska Native, why do you think going to a community college is a good thing [00:24:30] and what do you say to students when they're thinking about their choices?

Marissa Hemstreet: That maybe a four year, full-time, student thing is not the best option for them. For me myself, I needed to be financially independent at 18 and I needed to have my own place. And then in order for me to go to school, I had to put that in the back burner. I feel that community colleges provide that platform that is less expensive for myself. I didn't feel the pressure [00:25:00] of a four year university. I felt that my instructors, professors, even tutors, were a little bit more available to speak. They didn't have an overload of students in their classes. And I felt that if I went into the student union, that I could get resources that same day, people were readily available.

When I was looking to attend the state college, I felt like I was playing phone tag with a lot of the folks because maybe they were overwhelmed. But with the community [00:25:30] colleges, I noticed kind of a more personal touch. I do



think that state colleges care, I felt that I received that more personal touch at a community college.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: And let me ask you this, our listeners can hear you talking. I have the benefit of being able to see you on my screen but you're clearly a very articulate individual. You seem very strong and resilient. What about your background as a person of indigenous [00:26:00] descent, what part of that background makes you resilient? What are some of the benefits from your background that you carry forward in your work at San Jose City College and beyond? Rather than us focusing about why your situation has been a challenge, tell me about why your background has been a great benefit to your success?

Marissa Hemstreet: Yeah. Well, my indigenous experience is unique to me. I'm not a Res-Native even though I wish I was some times but I see my Res-family plenty enough. [00:26:30] So I grew up in Stockton, California. Over there, like I said, I wasn't very super connected. And as I became an adult, I figured out why. My father, he's very in touch with his Navajo roots but he's also traumatized by them. So hearing Navajo kind of gives him a little bit of PTSD and he didn't want to be around that. And by him not being near that, he didn't expose his children to that, me or my sisters or my brother. But coming to San Jose, I was immersed [00:27:00] in the inter tribal community here that we have. We have a mixture of over...

Well, there's over 500 tribes in California alone and in San Jose, there's a high concentration of us. And I've met my Navajo brothers and sisters just being out in the community here, going to pow was at Santa Clara, going to pow wow at Stanford university. And what made me laugh is that actually at my job, there's a coworker of mine, her name's Jessica. And we were talking about Navajo ancestry [00:27:30] because we both have family members who served in world war II as Navajo code Talkers. And I was just like, "Wow, that's amazing." And I'm like, "Well, what are your clans?" You just get a little deeper into it. What's your family bloodline kind of thing and we share the same paternal clan bloodline.

So she's my actual cousin, blood cousin, and I was like, "What?" So, it's nice. I've kind of got connected to the community. I've got connected to my actual family even though I feel that all indigenous peoples are my family. [00:28:00] No matter where you go, indigenous people are there so, it's nice. And then through these different connections I found other opportunities for work, for school. Like I shared earlier that I had a coworker who went to the same college as me and he shared his experience with his counselor who we both really love, her name is Elena Dutra. Amazing person and she's very inspiration. And she really takes her time to work with anyone even if you have an academic crisis, she's there for you.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: [00:28:30] Wow. That's really great. So happy that you're having this experience and I'm particularly thankful to the faculty and staff at St. Jose city college for all

they do for students like you. Now let me ask you one other question, we're making our way through this pandemic, has COVID 19 impacted your experience there as a student San Jose city college? And if so, how is it impacting you?

Marissa Hemstreet: I never took an online class before the pandemic because I [00:29:00] was afraid that I would not do well. I was kind of writing my destiny before it happened. So the challenge was being comfortable going online as a person who suffers from different types of mental illnesses. I suffer from anxiety so switching online really brought out that anxiety of, "My goodness, can I do this? Is this something I can do? I've never done this before." Trying to stick your toe in the water before you actually do it, check the temperature. We were just thrust into it and [00:29:30] it was like a lack of face to face time with friends or even students that you would regularly have available as study buddies.

So trying to figure out how do I study on my own? How do I talk to a tutor if my tutor that I usually talk to is not there. But the one thing that kept me going through the whole pandemic was actually this quote that I've had for a few years, it's by Earl Nightingale and it says, don't be discouraged by the time it takes to achieve a goal because the time's going to pass anyways. So that was one [00:30:00] thing I was trying to think about and keep in mind when it came to switching to online schooling. And remembering that it's okay, I'll be all right, time's going to pass anyways. I can spend this time furthering my education journey or I can spend this time getting an extra job, working 40 hours a week again and just having fun but actually not having anything to show that I am working towards my educational goals.

After the first semester, it was easier to kind [00:30:30] of deal with once you get used to it. The human brain is a wonderful thing and we learn to accept circumstances no matter what they may be and it became the new normal. And I did see a lot of my fellow classmates drop out of classes because they found it hard for them mainly because of internet access, their laptop didn't have a camera so the teachers were saying, "You need to have your camera on." How can I have my camera on if it's broken or I just don't have a laptop that has that capability? So [00:31:00] in the beginning it was lack of resource but San Jose City College was very resilient and they started offering students laptops to take home, iPads, whatever they needed they actually had it provided to them.

I was lucky enough to actually have a laptop with camera capabilities so I didn't need to borrow one from my school but I appreciated that they had that option available.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: That's great to hear. So we're getting close to time and I want to end by asking you both a question to wrap things up. First, [00:31:30] I'll finish with you Marissa, based on your experience, what do you want our listeners to know or to better understand about your experience or students that share similar experiences as you? What would you like to tell them about how we can create a more inviting campus community for students such as yourself?

Marissa Hemstreet: Maybe a designated space for American Indian students to congregate or even a group? Yeah. Even at my place that I work, [00:32:00] sorry I keep throwing them in there, we have an inter tribal health council. So all these different people who are part of different tribes, we kind of get together, we figure out how we can better serve the American Indian community. And that can not only be done at a health center that could be done at a school or anywhere people congregate so having a place for that. I know that we do have a STEM Native American group. The name escapes me at this moment but I do know that that is available and I would be [00:32:30] able to attend that because my major is kinesiology. So just a group, a club, something of that nature, even a physical place to congregate because I feel like there's that saying, there's no place like home. Well, how can I feel like I'm at home if I don't physically have a place? Even having a designated space once a week would be amazing.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: Well, we're very happy that you gave us some of your time. Very proud that you're one of our students, Marissa so thank you for sharing your experience. [00:33:00] Dr. Rodriguez, let me end with this question for you and I know it's a challenging question that we could probably talk about all day. But if you had a few things to share about how to better support our American Indian and Alaskan Native students, I mean, we see the challenges that we face in the system. Our student enrollment is down particularly amongst students of color and indigenous students. We see challenges in achievement gaps for traditionally underrepresented groups. [00:33:30] If you had a few things to offer to our college leaders, faculty, staff, community on how we can support our students, what would you say?

Dr. Stanley Rodriguez: First, I wanted to echo what Marissa was talking about. Having a center on a campus like an inter tribal resource center, things like that, where native people can come together. We've seen that with other different groups. And I have seen that [00:34:00] happen over at the Sovereignty Center at Cal State, San Marcos, and it is really something to see all these native students come together and just be there for each other and cry in each other's shoulder and just also help each other to make it through. So because we as native people statistically, we're barely a blip on the radar at times so what can be done? That's one of the things. So, Native people can [00:34:30] find each other and be there to support each other.

Another thing, counseling services, those are very important. And what I would say for the faculty is, as a teacher our job is to teach the students. Knowledge without sharing is not really knowledge and that's what we are doing, we are imparting knowledge. But to do checks with the students, to see how they're doing, what is going on. Many of the native students who live on the reservations [00:35:00] maybe having of things going on with them such as family of origin issues, could be other things going on. Chemical use disorder problems, maybe not with themselves but other family members. But the point I'm making is, they could be struggling internally. And I think it's important that we come there and we support them and help them and let them know that

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we're here for them. And rather than letting that just take them down, what can we do to help them [00:35:30] get through? And that's what I see.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: Well, thank you for that, Dr. Rodriguez. And of course I think another piece to that is helping and supporting faculty and staff like you who are there for our students, there to help share your experience and be there as a mentor to support our students. So thank you for your work. Marissa, thank you for sharing your story. We all look forward to hearing more about your continued success and your success at San Jose State as a physical therapist [00:36:00] and thank you to both of you for being with us.

Dr. Stanley Rodriguez: Thank you.

Marissa Hemstreet: Thank you.

Eloy Ortiz Oakley: So this has been another great episode of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office podcast. Thank you to all of our listeners. I wish you a very happy new year. Look forward to continuing our conversation in 2022. Thanks.

Speaker 4: Be sure to join us for the next California Community Colleges podcast. This has been a California Community Colleges presentation.